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THE INTERIM

OCTOBER 1997 HELENA, MONTANA VOL. XI NO. 5

PLEASE RETURN

SUBCOMMITTEE FOR THE REVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF WELFARE AND CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS

New Subcommittee Created... On July 18, the Legislative Council authorized the creation of a new subcommittee called the "Subcommittee for the Revision and Maintenance of Welfare and Child Support Enforcement Programs". The purpose of the Subcommittee is to prepare options for consideration by the 56th Legislature should that Legislature fail to reenact the provisions of Senate Bill No. 374 (Chapter No. 552, Laws of 1997). SB 374 implemented the child support enforcement provisions of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which is the federal welfare reform law.

The House members of this new Subcommittee are Representatives Peggy Arnott, Beverly Barnhart, Duane Grimes, and Diane Sands. The Senate members have yet to be appointed. As soon as the Senate appointments are made, the Subcommittee will schedule its first meeting.

If you wish to be on the interested persons' mailing list for this new Subcommittee, please contact Connie Erickson at the Legislative Services Division, (406)444-3064 or by e-mail <cerickson@mt.gov>.

COMMITTEE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY AND BUDGET

Committee to Meet in October... The Joint Committee on Postsecondary Education Policy and Budget (PEPB) will meet at 9 a.m. on October 20 in Room 104 of the Capitol Building (not on October 17 as previously scheduled).

Items on the agenda include a focus on the experiment station/public service agency study, lump-sum funding, and two-year education.

ADMINISTRATIVE CODE COMMITTEE

Committee Holds First Meeting on September 12...The Administrative Code Committee held its first meeting of the interim on September 12. The Committee elected Senator Larry Baer as the Presiding Officer and Representative Diane Sands as the Vice Presiding Officer.

Committee Seeks Implementation of HB 199...Chapter 340, Laws of 1997 (HB 199) requires a notice of proposed rulemaking filed with the Secretary of State to be mailed to the sponsor of the legislative bill that enacted a section of the MCA that is cited as implemented in the rulemaking proposal notice if the notice is the initial proposal to implement the MCA section. Chapter 340 also provides that, prior to such notice, the agency must notify the sponsor at the time that agency personnel begin in-house work on the content and wording of the rule.

Chapter 340 amended the bill-sponsor notice requirements into section 2-4-302, MCA. Subsection (7) of section 2-4-305, MCA, provides that a rule is not valid unless notice of it is given, and it is adopted in substantial compliance with section 2-4-302, MCA. The Committee believes that rules adopted without the two sponsor notifications required by Chapter 340 stand on a tenuous legal footing. The Committee received testimony of failures to comply with Chapter 340.

The Committee voted to send two letters regarding the implementation of Chapter 340. The first letter is to the Governor. It requests him to ask the executive branch agencies to comply with Chapter 340, which became effective on April 22, 1997, and further requests the Governor to inform the Committee of measures being taken by his office and the agencies to ensure compliance with Chapter 340.

The second letter is to the Deputy Secretary of State in charge of the Administrative Rules Bureau. It requests the Bureau to add an item to the format for a filed notice of a proposal to amend, adopt, or repeal one or more administrative rules. The addition to the format would help ensure compliance with the two bill-sponsor notice requirements of Chapter 340. The addition to the format could be a requirement that in the notice paragraph near the beginning of the proposal notice the agency must either state that: (1) the two bill-sponsor notice requirements of section 2-4-302, MCA, do not apply, or (2) the two bill-sponsor notice requirements of section 2-4-302, MCA, apply and the two notices have been given. Alternatively, the addition to the format could be three lines at the bottom of the last page of the notice that would read something like:

"Please check one of the following:

The two bill sponsor notice requirements of section
2-4-302, MCA, do not apply.

The two bill sponsor notice requirements of section 2-4-302, MCA, apply and have been complied with."

The Committee believes that the Bureau has the power to do this under section 2-4-306(2), MCA, and the power to refuse to file a notice that does not comply with the addition to the notice proposal format.

Committee Requests Agencies to Repeal Rules No Longer Applicable...A third letter was requested by Representative John Cobb. It is in the form of a memo to the heads of the executive branch departments and the offices created by the Montana Constitution and statutes. It requests them to identify MCA sections that were repealed during the 1997 Regular Session of the Legislature and that either grant their agency authority to adopt administrative rules or may be implemented by agency rule. The Committee further requested that each department repeal any rules adopted under, or implementing, those repealed MCA sections. The Committee noted that under section 2-4-314, MCA, each agency shall at least biennially review its rules to determine if any existing rule should be repealed.

INTERIM PROPERTY TAX COMMITTEE

Property Tax Committee Goes East...The Legislature's Interim Property Tax Committee, created by Senate Bill 195, met in Miles City and Forsyth on September 18 and 19, respectively. The Committee held a work session on the afternoon of September 18 at Miles Community College and finished the day's work with a public hearing the evening of the 18th. During the work session, the Committee reviewed historic trends, since 1972 and adoption of the new Constitution, in tax collections, in market values and taxable values in the context of property taxation, with regard to property taxes paid by type of property and from the perspective of where property tax revenues were and are expended. Testimony and comments from locally-elected officials focused on the challenges and problems that have resulted from legislative actions and voter initiatives, changes in the state's and local economies, federal mandates, and so forth faced and that are faced by local governments. The work session was the Committee's second such session of an anticipated 11 meetings.

At upcoming meetings in October and December, the members will examine the theory and practice of property valuation for property tax purposes, trends in local government (including schools) mill levies since 1972, and comparisons between Montana's property tax system and property tax systems used in other states. In January, Committee members will begin to propose options for revising, reforming, or replacing the property tax system for consideration by the full Committee. The "options proposal and consideration" phase of the study will continue through June, with the study and the Committee's activities concluding in September 1998.

To Meet Next in Dillon and Butte...The next meetings of the Interim Property Tax Committee will be held in Dillon and Butte on October 30 and 31, respectively.

The format will be a work session in Dillon on the afternoon of Thursday, October 30, followed by a public hearing that evening in Dillon. On the following Friday morning, October 31, the Committee will conduct a public hearing in Butte.

Similar meetings will also be held in Hamilton and Missoula in December and throughout other regions of the state for the remainder of the interim. Legislators from within the general geographic area of future meetings will receive individual notice of the meetings. For further information, including a schedule of Committee meeting dates and cities, please contact Dave Bohyer at the Legislative Services Division 444-3064 or by e-mail <dbohyer@mt.gov>.

CORRECTIONAL STANDARDS AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Subcommittee Meets...The Private Prisons and Programs Subcommittee met September 6 and is looking into the medical costs at the Bobby Ross Group-operated facility in Dickens County, Texas, the administrative rules for the Request for Proposals for a private prison in Montana, and sentencing issues in conjunction with an ad hoc committee being formed with the State Bar. The Planning and Projections Subcommittee met September 19 and is preparing information looking towards next legislative session and the need for clear, concise information.

Committee to Meet in Deer Lodge...The full Committee on Correctional Standards and Oversight will be meeting on October 2 and 3 in Deer Lodge.

On October 2, the Committee will tour Montana State Prison. On October 3, the Committee will hold a meeting at the Community Center that will include information from the Department of Corrections on the various private contracts that the Department has with county jails and other states to house Montana inmates.

Subcommittees to Meet...The Jail Standards Subcommittee will be meeting in conjunction with the Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officer's Association on October 9 and 10 in Bozeman. The Juvenile Issues Subcommittee, the Private Prisons Subcommittee, and the Planning and Projections Subcommittee may also be meeting in mid- to late-October.

Committee to Tour Women's Prison...The Committee will tour the Montana Women's Prison in Billings on November 7. The Committee will then meet at the prison. The agenda will include a presentation on the Intensive Supervision Program and on the Department of Corrections' 5-year plan and long-range building program and an update on juvenile corrections issues.

If you need additional details on subcommittee meetings or are interested in being placed on the interested persons list for the Correctional Standards and Oversight Committee or its subcommittees, please contact Susan Fox at 444-3064 or by e-mail <sfox @mt.gov>.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

EQC Honors Rep. Dick Knox...The EQC met on Thursday and Friday, September 18 and 19. The EQC honored the memory of the late Representative Dick Knox by planting a blue spruce tree on the Capitol grounds. Over 130 people attended the ceremony including 48 Knox family members. Dick received an Environmental Protection Agency award for his efforts in the development of natural resource and environmental policy. Doris Knox wanted us to thank everyone for their help, thoughts, and prayers over the last four months.

Montana Growth Issues...At its September meeting, the Council heard presentations that provided a conceptual background to growth issues in Montana. The background included a summary of environmental trends that relate to growth, a summary of a study of growth activity in Flathead and Cascade Counties, and a slide presentation by the Stillwater County Planner, illustrating the kind of data that the county has compiled and how it makes the planning office more effective. The Council members then broke into four small groups where they brainstormed, identified, and prioritized what they saw as the key issues. The groups came up with remarkably similar issues such as the need for more county information, the need for a list of tools and resources available, and the need to encourage bottom up compatible growth.

Council co-chairs appointed a Growth Subcommittee of six members. The Subcommittee elected co-chairs and set the next meeting for November 13. The Subcommittee wants to look into gathering information on the trends and impacts of growth. Specifically, the Subcommittee plans to survey local governments to see if they are having problems related to growth and to find out what those problems might be. The Subcommittee will also look into initiatives in other Rocky Mountain states. For more information, contact Martha Colhoun at 444-3742.

Water Policy...The Council has appointed a six-person Water Policy Subcommittee. The Subcommittee elected Rep. Bill Tash as chair. The Subcommittee's primary focus over the interim will be the implementation of House Bill 546 implementation of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs). The Subcommittee also has numerous water policy statutory responsibilities to fulfill throughout the interim as well. For more information, contact Kathleen Williams at 444-3742.

Waste Tire Study...LEPO staff held an organizational and scoping meeting with 24 individuals who have expressed an interest in participating as an advisory working group for the study of waste tire management alternatives directed by SB 332. Current problems were identified and information on specific possible alternatives was requested. Staff is gathering information on tire landfilling costs; feasibility costs of tire shredding, slicing, baling, shipping, and other processing methods; and other management alternatives from states with population and recycling marketing circumstances similar to Montana's. A summary of tire management alternatives currently available in the state will be presented along with

additional research on other possibilities at the next scheduled meeting of the working group on November 12, at 9 a.m. in Room 108 of the State Capitol.

For more information, contact Larry Mitchell, LEPO staff, 444-3742.

Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Implementation...The Council received a two hour training session on MEPA implementation. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) updated the Council on its MEPA activities over the 1997-98 interim. The DEQ also reported that it was in the process of developing a MEPA implementation policy.

Environmental Self Audit Update...The Department of Environmental Quality updated the Council on the implementation of the environmental self audit legislation that was passed by the 1997 Legislature. The effective date for that act is October 1, 1997.

Next EQC Meeting....The next EQC meeting is scheduled for November 14 in Missoula, Montana.

For more information please contact the LEPO staff at 444-3742 or via the Internet at <teverts@mt.gov>.

TRANSITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee to Meet in Billings...The Transition Advisory Committee on Electrical Industry Restructuring (TAC) will hold its second meeting on October 6-7 at the Clarion Hotel in Billings. The meeting coincides with the annual convention of the Montana Electrical Cooperatives Association. The Cooperatives' response to Senate Bill 390 will be a featured topic on Monday, Oct. 6. The meeting will also include panel presentations and follow-on discussions of the historical evolution of the electrical industry in Montana and the surrounding region as well as existing and anticipated energy assistance programs.

Additional items on the agenda include an explanation of fuel cell technology, updates from TAC members, and an assessment of a proposed newsletter to serve as the Committee's main reporting and community outreach tool.

For further information, contact Stephen Maly (smaly@mt.gov) or Todd Everts (teverts@mt.gov) at (406)444-3064.

GAMBLING COMMISSION

Commission Holds First Meeting...The Gambling Commission established by House Bill No. 615 held its first meeting on Tuesday, September 16, at the State Capitol. Governor Racicot appointed the following individuals to the 5-member

Commission: Dr. Robert Caldwell, a psychiatrist from Helena; Rodney Brod, from the Sociology Department at the University of Montana (Missoula); Barbara Nemecek, Dean of the Business School at Montana State University (Billings); Shannon Taylor, from the College of Business at MSU (Bozeman); and Phoebe Williams, a marketing executive from Deer Lodge. The members elected Mr. Taylor to serve as presiding officer.

The Commission will meet again in Room 331 in the Capitol Building on Thursday, October 2, starting at 10:30 a.m. The primary purpose of this second meeting is to discuss and finalize the provisions of a request for proposals (RFP), which is tentatively scheduled for release the week of October 6. The group may reconvene on Friday, October 3, if circumstances warrant further work. The RFP will be sent to a list of private and public sector research organizations in Montana as well as other states.

Anyone interested in being placed on the RFP list, or on the more general interested persons list for the duration of the Commission study period (now through October 1, 1998), please contact Stephen Maly at (406) 444-3064 or by e-mail <smaly@mt.gov>.

COMMITTEE ON STATE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Committee Holds First Meeting...Members of the Joint Oversight Committee on State Management Systems graciously agreed to gather on the day after the Labor Day holiday to organize and begin planning for the 1997-1998 interim. During this September 2 meeting, the Committee unanimously elected Senator Mack Cole as Presiding Officer and Representative Deb Kottel as Vice-Presiding Officer. Only three members, Senators Cole and Greg Jergeson and Representative Deb Kottel, are seasoned State Management Systems Committee veterans. Rounding out the roster are new members Senators Mike Taylor and Sue Bartlett and Representatives Tim Dowell, Bill Rehbein, and Chris Ahner.

House Bill No. 89, the Committee's enabling statute, is the third piece of legislation in recent history to assemble a legislative committee to address state government information technology. House Joint Resolution No. 48, passed during the 1991 Legislative Session, directed the Legislative Finance Committee to collaborate with the Audit Committee and the Department of Administration (D of A) to study the management of information processing technology. Senate Joint Resolution No. 23, adopted by the 1995 Legislature, authorized a committee to study laws and procedures governing state personnel, finance, and asset management and investigate opportunities for installing an integrated state personnel, finance, and asset management system. The Project to Reengineer the Revenue and Information Management Environment (MT PRRIME) emerged from the work completed by the SJR 23 Committee.

At its September 2 meeting, Committee members were informed of previous legislation aimed at addressing information technology in state government, the

accomplishments of the SJR 23 Committee, and the wide range of statutes potentially subject to Committee review.

Committee Hears From D of A... Tony Herbert, Administrator of D of A's Information Services Division, provided Committee members with an introduction to information technology and briefed the Committee on the status of technology systems in state government. Lois Menzies, D of A Director, discussed information technology policy, strategic planning, and the role and composition of the Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC). Dave Ashley, MT PRRIME Project Director, briefed the Committee on the origins and progress of MT PRRIME.

Committee Plans Interim Work... With the background information, progress reports, and updates provided, Committee members turned their attention to discussing plans for the remainder of the interim. Numerous issues for possible study and oversight arose, including information technology ethics and security, year 2000 preparation, review of administrative rules governing information technology, data impact statements, and voice mail. Committee members also expressed interest in attending and participating in future meetings of ITAC, the Summit Net Executive Council (SEC), and the MT PRRIME steering Committee.

Committee to Work With Local Governments... The Committee's statutory charge to involve local governments in information technology planning and implementation precipitated a discussion on the technological relationship between counties and the state and how the Committee might foster better communication. Committee members suggested that the Committee and staff take an active role by identifying and improving upon ways in which the state and local governments electronically exchange information. Members agreed that the specific needs of local governments need to be considered in any state information technology planning efforts that might impact counties, particularly those counties without the tax base to support large-scale equipment and staff acquisition. Future meetings of the Committee on State Management Systems will include more detailed discussions of the information interfaces between the state and local governments.

Next Meeting in November... The Committee will meet next on November 18, with additional meetings scheduled to coordinate with those of ITAC and SEC as often as possible.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Committee to Meet in Lane Deer... The Committee on Indian Affairs will travel to the Northern Cheyenne Reservation on October 7 and 8. The purpose of the meeting is to tour the Reservation and to meet with tribal officials on issues of concern to both the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and the State of Montana.

On Tuesday, the Committee will visit the schools on the Reservation,

including Dull Knife Memorial College; the Indian Health Services Clinic; and the Littlewolf Capitol Building site. On Wednesday morning, the Committee will meet with the Northern Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce, Native Action, and the Tribal Forestry Department.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Committee will hold a meeting with the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council in the Dull Knife Studio at Dull Knife Memorial College. The meeting will begin at 1 p.m. One of the topics for discussion will be welfare reform on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. The Tribal Council will also present other topics for discussion with the Committee.

Committee to Meet in November...The Committee will meet again on November 6 in Room 104 of the State Capitol. The main topic at that meeting will be welfare reform and its impact on Montana's Indian reservations.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON VETERANS' NEEDS

Subcommittee Meets at Fort Harrison...The Joint Interim Subcommittee on Veterans' Needs held its first meeting at the Veterans' Administration Center at Fort Harrison, just outside of Helena, on September 11.

The Subcommittee received a background briefing from Mr. Jim Jacobsen, Administrator of the Veterans' Affairs Division of the Montana Department of Military Affairs. Mr. Jacobsen's briefing covered the organization, mission, and recent activities of the Veterans' Affairs Division as well as current issues. Mr. Jacobsen reported that certain statutes related to veterans' burial need to be clarified because, although the 1995 Legislature provided that the state would help defray some of the costs to counties for a veteran's headstone, the intent was that counties would still be required to pay the first \$30 of the cost. However, the statutory language is not being interpreted by county treasurers according to that intent, and some counties seem to be avoiding any payment for the cost of a veteran's headstone. A headstone can cost up to about \$70. The new law was to provide that any amount above the \$30 to be paid by the veteran's county of residence, up to \$70, could be deducted from the county treasurer's monthly remittance to the state treasury.

Subcommittee Discusses Long-Term Care for Veterans...The Subcommittee also received a background briefing from Mr. Mike Hanshew, Administrator of the Senior and Long-Term Care Division of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services; Mr. Pat Estenson, Superintendent of the Montana Veterans' Home in Columbia Falls; and Mr. F. Ed Croucher, the Administrative Officer supervising the operation of the Eastern Montana Veterans' Home in Glendive. Issues raised included the need to review the mission and resources of the veterans' homes in view of the changing characteristics and care and treatment needs of Montana veterans and to either reaffirm that these homes are primarily nursing home facilities or to adjust the homes' missions and roles to address other treatment needs such as those related to acute alcoholism, Alzheimer's Disease, or psychiatric problems. For example, there is

an Alzheimer's unit at the home in Glendive, but not at the facility in Columbia Falls.

Hears From Interested Persons...Finally, the Subcommittee heard testimony from interested persons. Issues raised included special license plates for retirees of the Montana National Guard and members of the Legion of Valor, the status of the unfunded National Guard educational benefit program passed by the 1997 Legislature, and a device to assist vision-impaired veterans.

Subcommittee To Hold Two More Meetings...The Subcommittee discussed a proposed study plan that included two more meetings, the next one to be held at the Montana Veterans' Home in Columbia Falls and the final meeting to be held in Helena. The Columbia Falls meeting date has not yet been set. However, the Subcommittee is considering an early November meeting date. This next meeting will include follow-up reports on the issues raised at the September 11 meeting.

For more information, please contact Sheri Heffelfinger at 444-3064.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

Committee to Interview Contractors...The Committee on Public Employee Retirement Systems (CPERS) will conduct its second meeting on October 2, in Room 108 of the State Capitol in Helena. The start time has been tentatively set for 8:30 a.m.

During this meeting, CPERS will interview selected companies that have bid on a contract with CPERS to help design a new or modified Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). CPERS issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) on July 25, 1997. Five companies responded. An evaluation committee scored each proposal and will recommend to CPERS during a conference call September 24 that the three highest scorers be invited to the October 2 meeting for an interview. CPERS will make the final determination on which companies will be invited.

For further information contact Sheri Heffelfinger at 444-3064.

THE BACK PAGE

In 1992, the Montana electorate approved Constitutional Initiative No. 64 that limited the terms of office for all statewide elected officials and for all legislators. This initiative was part of a general trend across the nation to limit the amount of time that a person can serve in an elective office. Term limits for Montana House members will begin in the year 2000. For Senate members, the date is yet unknown.

In this month's "**The Back Page**", Bob Person discusses how the Montana Legislature is preparing for term limits.

PREPARING FOR LEGISLATIVE TERM LIMITS

By Robert Person, Executive Director
Legislative Services Division

INTRODUCTION

As Montana legislators anticipate term limits, they have gone into effect elsewhere. A recent publication from the National Conference of State Legislatures asks in its title whether there is time enough to respond. Montana legislative leaders and the Legislative Council have begun to look at the issue to envision exactly what kinds of changes to expect and what steps might be taken to assure that our legislature may continue effectively to exercise the legislative power of state government vested in the Legislature by the Constitution of the State of Montana. All Montanans have a vital stake in this endeavor.

WHO IS LIMITED IN MONTANA?

At the moment, it is unclear exactly when the constitutional limit on terms will begin in Montana. While it is clear that 52 members of the House of Representatives on September 24, 1997 if they run for office again in 1998 and are elected, may not run for office in 2000. The situation is not clear for 10 current members of the Senate who may or may not be eligible to file for office next year. Article IV, section 8 of the Montana Constitution directs that the Secretary of State not certify the candidacy of or place the name of a candidate on a ballot if the constitutional provisions limiting an individual's service in that office have been met. Since uncertainty arose over interpretation of the ballot language and the language of the constitution taken together, the Secretary of State has asked for guidance by the Attorney General. A response is expected before the end of the year. Should the ruling enable the 10 senators to run in 1998, 14 different currently serving senators will limit out in 2000.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

What will be the effect of all this? There has been a great deal of speculation nationwide as to the effect of term limits on the institution of the Legislature. Montana has long been characterized by significant voluntary turnover in the legislature. While there are a few very long serving members, most legislators have served less than 10 years in their position before leaving. This pattern is reflected in the fact that the largest number of legislators to limit out will be those first elected to their current house in 1994, just as term limits went into effect.

**Term limited legislators -- number
in each class**

Class of ->	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93
House	2			2	1		3	5	2	9	8	20
Senate (1998)					2		1		2		5	
Senate (2000)						4	1			2		7

Nationally, legislators have been quite concerned about the loss of "institutional memory" due to term limits. Clearly, that will be experienced. But more significant may be the loss of procedural knowledge gained through participation in the process. All of the current legislative leaders are included in the numbers above with service ranging around 10 to 18 years. The response to a question asking what should be done to prepare for term limits included in a Legislative Services Division poll of legislators taken during the session documented an inherent understanding of this issue.

In the poll, we asked, "What, if anything, should the Legislative Branch be doing to prepare for term limits?" Here are the responses:

Specific suggestions: Beef up orientation; expand availability of legislative histories on bills or issues; train staff on Mason's rules; change the paperwork where possible to electronic availability; start looking at leadership in the younger legislators -- although each election can limit your term; can't count on legislator knowledge of history on issues addressed -- or how issues are interrelated; I think we need staff assessment on each bill. I understand many legislative (or caucus staffs) prepare such analysis; we should be recording floor sessions; probably some form of intensive training for those involved in the fiscal issues; tough question with no simple answer; looks to me as each party should start and initiate action; excellent question -- continue emphasis on objectivity -- lean more to standard [illegible] of drafts; run for office; devising ways to mitigate the excessive influence lobbyists will have; shoot bureaucrats (no, just kidding); prepare an instruction book and mail, with a copy of the House/Senate rules, to successful candidates; it's scary -- I'd make sure you keep your help and work with leadership and "old timers" for advice; new legislators need to learn the difference between the Legislature and the administration -- and the

IMPORTANCE of separating the two; pass term limits on all lobbyists, all administrators, and agency staff; assigning our new legislators to important positions; line up some counselors for those in need!; more legislator training.

General concerns: Legislative Services will need patience, patience, patience; get ready for a mess; scream with panic; heaven only can help!; worry; brace yourselves; hold onto your hats!!

While there are many interesting responses here, the idea of providing more intense training and opportunities for more experience in leadership roles early in a legislative career is a theme that repeatedly projects itself. Elsewhere in the poll, the need for more emphasis on training new legislators on rules and procedure also showed up as a predominant response.

The Legislative Council subcommittee on Legislative Improvement is also looking at the question of what should be done to prepare and is following up on these and other ideas. Included in legislative improvement steps already approved by the Council are plans to provide a more detailed orientation session for new members, providing assigned mentors for new members, and providing better training for committee chairmen. Chairman training would include having committee members serve in the chair on a rotating basis to build on their experiential base. Subcommittee members Sen. Halligan, Sen. Bishop, Rep. Grinde, and Rep. Cocchiarella would welcome additional ideas to help prepare for this major change.

On the more personal side of the issue is how individual members who will face ending their time in the legislature may deal with the opportunity to choose to enter the state retirement system. The Legislative Council has directed that information on legislator retirement options be provided to all legislators. The Legislative Services Division is preparing that information to be included with the next issue of the Interim. For legislators approaching or already past their 5th year of service, participation in the Public Employee Retirement System is something that needs to be seriously explored and measured against each members personal situation. The Council encourages each member to study this information closely before their service limit is reached.

CONCLUSION

Do we have time enough in Montana to prepare? Will our Legislature remain a vital institution of democracy -- the elected body closest to the people effectively reflecting the will of the state in policy. Or will it become as some have projected, "an inchoate body without organization or leadership" or with four distinct classes in eight years divided up into freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, an "institution plagued by all the depressing rigidities of high school"?

The answer is in our hands. The Montana Legislature is planning for this day. It can and will work because it must.

INTERIM
CALENDAR

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED,
ALL ROOM DESIGNATIONS ARE IN THE CAPITOL

OCTOBER

October 1, SB 378 Subcommittee of Legislative Finance Committee, Room 104,
3:30 p.m.

October 2, Committee on Public Employee Retirement Systems, Room 108,
8:30 a.m.

October 2, Gambling Commission, Room 331, 10:30 a.m.

October 2, Correctional Standards and Oversight Committee, tour of Montana State
Prison, Deer Lodge

October 3, Correctional Standards and Oversight Committee, Community Center,
Deer Lodge, 9 a.m.

October 2, Legislative Finance Committee, Room 104, 9 a.m.

October 3, Legislative Finance Committee, Room 104, 8 a.m.

October 6 and 7, Electric Utility Restructuring Transition Advisory Committee,
Billings

October 7, Committee on Indian Affairs, tour of Northern Cheyenne Indian
Reservation, Lame Deer

October 8, Committee on Indian Affairs, Dull Knife Memorial College, Lame Deer,
1 p.m.

October 9, Revenue Estimating Subcommittee of ROC, Room 108, 1 p.m.

October 10, Revenue Oversight Committee, Room 108, 9 a.m.

October 13, Columbus Day observed, legal holiday

October 13, Legislative Council, Room 104

October 20, Postsecondary Education Policy and Budget Committee, Room 108,
9 a.m.

October 20 and 21, Transportation Funding Study Committee, Room 108, 9 a.m.

October 30, Interim Property Tax Committee, Dillon

October 31, Interim Property Tax Committee, Butte

NOVEMBER

November 6, Committee on Indian Affairs, Room 104

November 7, Legislative Audit Committee, Room 104, 8:30 a.m.

November 7, Correctional Standards and Oversight Committee, Women's Prison,
Billings

November 11, Veterans' Day, legal holiday

November 12, EQC Waste Tire Study Working Group, Room 108, 9 a.m.

November 13, EQC Growth Subcommittee

November 14, Environmental Quality Council, Missoula

November 18, Oversight Committee on State Management Systems

November 27, Thanksgiving, legal holiday

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